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report containing information on the ratings of pilots of the Polish Air Force and describing the requirements for obtaining such ratings.

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Pilot Ratings in the Polish Air ForceGeneral Information

1. All pilots in the Polish Air Force (PAF), regardless of the type of aircraft they flew, the unit they were assigned to, or the duty they performed, possessed one of the following ratings: ordinary pilot, third-class pilot, second-class pilot or first-class pilot. Uniforms of pilots who were holders of class ratings were distinguished by a badge which bore the class rating number, a small 1, 2 or 3. An ordinary pilot's badge was identical except that the space for the class number was blank. All classes had special monetary compensations in addition to the pilot's base pay or special duty pay. An ordinary pilot was only entitled to his base pay. If he performed special flight duty such as night flying, he was paid for that. If in addition to his special duty he was the holder of a class-rating, he received an additional allowance for the rating. Although all pilots in the PAF received the same base pay, as called for by their rank, and all were identically rewarded for special flights, compensations for class ratings were higher for jet pilots than for conventional pilots; however
2. A similar class-rating system also existed for navigators; they were the only other rated personnel in the PAF who were so distinguished. They also had their particular class rating indicated on their badge. 50X1-HUM
3. Class ratings were not permanent. If a pilot who possessed such a rating was involved in an accident and was found guilty of negligence or poor piloting, in addition to other disciplinary action he could also lose his class rating.¹ Although a pilot could only be awarded one class at the time (third, second and first) he could be demoted from first class to ordinary. Although it happened rarely, a pilot could also have his class-rating removed for improper conduct on the ground.
4. The class-rating system was originally introduced in the PAF in 1954. Its primary purpose was to motivate pilots to further develop their capabilities, since such a rating was supposedly indicative of an individual's knowledge and skill. The secondary purpose of the ratings was to raise the morale of pilots, since all other means to make extra money were controlled by job vacancies. For instance, an all-weather pilot's extra pay was the highest of all special duties; however, not all regiments were authorized such pilots and units which did seldom had more than six vacancies.

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Requirements

5. In order to obtain a class rating, pilots were not required to attend any special school. Nor were ratings awarded automatically because of rank or number of hours flown. All pilots who desired to obtain a class rating were compelled, besides meeting certain requirements, to successfully pass an examination. Requirements differed, of course, for each rating, since the higher the rating the more difficult the examination. These requirements actually consisted of the successful completion of a series of air exercises and maneuvers. An ordinary pilot who was assigned to a combat unit upon graduation from flight school was authorized to execute only a certain type of flying, which corresponded to the skill he had acquired in school and which was actually a training program repetition. When he had successfully completed this initial unit training program, which normally required a period of one year, he could then apply for permission to take the third-class rating test. Permission was granted by the unit commander, who could disapprove the request if he felt that a pilot was not quite ready for the test, even though he had completed the training program. A pilot was not compelled to seek a class rating. After he successfully completed the unit's initial training phase, he could continue into more difficult exercises and maneuvers and become a fully experienced pilot even though he did not possess a class rating. Consequently, class ratings did not always differentiate a pilot's skill and knowledge as they were meant to do. In fact, there were a substantial number of experienced pilots who did not attempt to get a class rating for a variety of reasons; one was to escape certain details, since the class-rated pilot was supposedly the better flier and officer and was frequently called upon to perform extra duties. Another reason was that in case of an aircraft accident, the class-rated pilot was not only more severely disciplined than an ordinary one, but he was also taunted by his fellow pilots about how he, a class-rated pilot, could have made such an error. The last and probably the main reason for not seeking a class rating was the ease with which such a rating could be lost. Naturally, there was also a group of individuals who, although experienced fliers, did not seek a class rating because they feared that they might fail the test which included, other subjects in addition to flying.

Examinations

6. Examinations of pilots for class ratings were conducted once per year under the supervision of PAF Headquarters personnel. One common site was chosen for all pilots who flew a certain type of aircraft. [redacted] Slupsk Airfield (N 54-29, 50X1-HUM E 17-06) was always selected for jet fighters. [redacted]

[redacted] Examiners consisted of PAF Headquarters personnel 50X1-HUM

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and selected pilots from various combat units. Candidates were tested separately for each of the three class ratings. Examinations consisted of three main phases: flying, knowledge of equipment, and military affairs. The flying portion of the test generally consisted of one or several air maneuvers, which were either executed in a UT-MIG-15 with an examiner, or in a fighter with the examiner flying a second aircraft. A number of questions about aircraft construction, components, and maintenance constituted the knowledge of equipment phase. As for the portion of the test dealing with military affairs, it consisted of a series of questions pertaining to rules and regulations, drills, duties of an officer, and military courtesy. Although it was not so officially, it seemed that for a third-class rating the flying portion of the test was the most emphasized. For a second-class rating, more importance was attached to the knowledge-of-equipment phase. For a first-class rating, pilots were thoroughly tested in each phase. Individuals who successfully completed the class-rating examination received orders published to that effect by PAF Headquarters. Attrition rates for the third-class rating were very small. However, a good 35 percent of candidates failed to pass the second-class rating examination. For the first-class rating, the requirements and test were so difficult that there were few qualified candidates to apply.

Third-Class Pilots

7. In order to be eligible for a third-class rating, a jet fighter pilot was compelled to successfully complete the following flight program: formations, basic acrobatics, flights in cloud formations, medium and high altitude flights, night flights, and a cross-country flight. A pilot who was awarded a third-class rating received an extra 100 zlotys per month.

Second-Class Pilots

8. The flight training program for a pilot eligible for a second-class rating was similar to the one above, except that more emphasis was placed on certain exercises and several new maneuvers were added. In addition to the flight program described above, it also included cross-country flights without the use of radio-navigational aids, formation flights at high altitudes, and flights in cloud formations at night. A second-class jet fighter pilot received an extra 150 zlotys per month, or 50 zlotys more than a third-class pilot.

First-Class Pilots

9. The flight program for candidates for a first-class rating was not standard. Although it included a series of exercises which could be performed by any pilot in a unit, certain maneuvers were executed only with the unit commander's approval, and the unit commander first had to obtain permission from PAF Headquarters

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in Warsaw. Such permission was granted only after the record of a candidate was studied at Headquarters and he was found to be eligible. The above procedure was followed because most of the additional exercises which had to be successfully executed for a first-class rating qualification were not in accordance with prescribed flight rules and regulations. In addition to the third and second-class flight programs, candidates for a first-class rating were required to successfully perform the following: landing without flaps; landing at night on an unilluminated runway; night firing at a target sleeve; night cross-country flights without using radio-navigational aids; and landing in high velocity cross-winds (approximately 20 meters per second). A pilot who was awarded a first-class rating received an additional 300 zlotys per month.

Miscellaneous Monetary Compensations

10.

In the PAF, an ordinary pilot was entitled only to the base salary of his rank. All officers of the same rank in the Polish armed forces received identical base salaries. In addition to class-rating pay, pilots could also receive extra sums of money for parachute jumping and special flights.² Special flight compensations were not monthly allowances as for class ratings, but instead were paid on an hourly basis. They included: flights in cloud formations - 200 zlotys per hour; night flights - 200 zlotys per hour; night flights in cloud formations - more than 200 zlotys per hour (exact sum unknown). All jet fighter pilots were eligible for the above compensations provided they possessed the required skill. One category of pilots did not receive special flight pay on an hourly basis but as a monthly allowance. These pilots existed only in fighter units; they were the so-called "aces" (asy) who performed an all-weather type of flying. They were all volunteers who in order to attain this status had to attend a several-month-long course at Mierzecice Airfield (N 50-29, E 19-05). Aces received an additional 400 zlotys per month besides their base salary and class-rating pay.³

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